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BOROUGH OF BOSTON AND PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE !-

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my Report on the Health of the Borough and Port of Boston during the Year 1939. The Report has been drawn up on the lines indicated in Circular 1961 of the Ministry of Health dated 16th. February, 1940, but having regard to the Ministry's Circular 2067 of the 19th. July, 1940, the contents have been much curtailed and confined to essential and urgent matters arising from or connected with the War and such alterations as have occurred in the various Public Health Services.

This Report is therefore to be regarded as an Interim Report only. It will be noted that a certain amount of the statistical matter usually included in Section "A" has been omitted, this being due to the fact that at the time of publication the necessary figures usually furnished by the Registrar-General have not been received. Suitable arrangements have however been made for the careful preservation of all records and statistics, in order that after the termination of the War the period now under review can be dealt with more fully in a report covering the whole period to the end of the last complete year. Separate statistics will then be given for each year, so that the annual records may, as far as practicable, be continuous and complete.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Staff of the Public Health Department and myself, I desire to express thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their continued support and interest. I also wish to express my appreciation to all the members of the Staff of the Department for the conscientious manner in which they have discharged their duties during a difficult year.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

DC Robertson

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,
6, Bridge Street,
BOSTON.

30th. JULY, 1940.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	3,257
Number of Inhabited Houses according to Rate Books (March 31st., 1940)	6,770
Rateable Value (March 31st., 1940)	£131,657
Sum represented by a Penny Rate..	£510

SOCIAL CONDITIONS :-

These remained very much as described in my Annual Report for 1938.

UNEMPLOYMENT :-

I am indebted to the Manager of the Boston Employment Exchange for the following particulars in respect of the Borough :-

<u>Number of Unemployed.</u>				
<u>1st. Qr.</u>	<u>Commencement of 2nd. Qr.</u>	<u>3rd. Qr.</u>	<u>4th. Qr.</u>	<u>End of Year.</u>
1,605	1,155	794	737	1,212

The high rate of unemployment at both the beginning and end of the year was due to severe weather conditions which caused a stoppage in all outside employment and seasonal slackness in the agricultural industry. With improved weather conditions from February to October the workpeople were gradually absorbed in these occupations. Conditions also improved with the arrival of the timber imports in May, but the restrictions on such imports after the outbreak of War caused some unemployment which was nevertheless counter-balanced by the commencement of work connected with the national war effort.

No direct evidence can be found to show that unemployment has exercised any significant influence on the health or physique of either adults or children in the Borough.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS :-

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Total Number of Live Births			
Registered during the Year ...	222	220	442
Total Number of Deaths			
Registered during the Year ...	185	144	329

N.B.- The above figures have not been adjusted with regard to inward and outward transfers.

INFANTILE MORTALITY :-

Of the total number of deaths registered in the Borough during 1938, the following were in respect of children under one year of age :-

Males: 6; Females: 5; Total: 11.

The Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 registered live births was therefore 24.89.

It should be noted that the above figures also have not been adjusted with regard to inward and outward transfers.

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

1. STAFF :-

The personnel of the Medical, Nursing, Sanitary and Clerical Staff of the Public Health Department remains as at the end of 1938, with the following alterations :-

Health Visitor/School Nurse.-

Miss M.M. Bradley, S.C.M., Health Visitor R.S.I.,
(resigned 30/8/39).

Miss I.P. Burt, S.R.N., S.R.F.N., S.C.M., Health Visitor
R.S.I. (appointed 4/10/39).

Venereal Diseases. (Holland County Council).-

J.H.F. Pankhurst, M.D., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.
(resigned 25.3.40).

J. Fielding, M.D., Ch.B., D.P.H., (appointed 26.3.40).

Chief Clerk.-

A. Lawther (resigned May, 1939).

G. Newham (appointed June, 1939).

LABORATORY FACILITIES :-

As a result of the outbreak of War, the laboratory arrangements described in my Annual Report for 1938 have been augmented by the Emergency Laboratory Service set up by the Ministry of Health. Under this Scheme the following Laboratories are available to carry out the examination of bacteriological and pathological specimens from the district if required :-

- (1) Public Health Laboratory, Technical College, Lincoln.
- (2) Public Health Laboratory, Isolation Hospital,
Groby Road, Leicester.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES :-

The same facilities exist as in 1938, for dealing with infectious and non-infectious cases arising in the Borough.

The Air Raid Precautions Scheme, which is administered by the Holland County Council, also provides for 8 full-time ambulances and 9 part-time converted commercial vehicles to be available for use in the Borough in the event of casualties arising from air raids.

NURSING IN THE HOME :-

The arrangements operated by the Boston and District Nursing Association remained unchanged during the year.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS :-

Arrangements in connection with the Infant Welfare Centre, the Dental Clinic for Mothers and Toddlers, and the Tuberculosis Dispensary, remain unchanged.

The following alterations have occurred with regard to other sections of the service :-

School Dental Clinic, Holland Sanatorium.-

In addition to the sessions held on Mondays and Thursdays, 9.45 a.m. to 4 p.m., a further session is now held on alternate Fridays, 9.45 a.m. to 12 noon.

School Clinic, George Street.-

Minor ailments are now treated daily, commencing at 10 a.m.

Orthopaedic Clinic, Holland Sanatorium.-

This Clinic is held for school and pre-school children on the first Wednesday in each month.

Ophthalmic Clinic, George Street.-

School and pre-school children are dealt with weekly on Wednesdays, commencing at 1.15 p.m.

Venereal Diseases Clinic, Holland Sanatorium.-

Males: (Dr. Fielding)-

Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

Wednesdays, 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Females and Children: (Dr. Kennedy)-

Tuesdays, 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

HOSPITALS :-

The hospital arrangements outlined in my last Annual Report remained unchanged during 1939, but in the event of an emergency the Hospitals and Institutions listed below, which are included in the County Emergency Hospital Scheme, will operate as required on the instructions of the Regional Hospital Officer of the Ministry of Health:-

Boston General Hospital.

Holland Sanatorium, Boston.

County of Holland Joint Isolation Hospital.

Johnson Hospital, Spalding.

Boston Public Assistance Institution.

Spalding Public Assistance Institution.

Boston Casual Wards.

Holbeach Casual Wards.

3. MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE :-

Midwifery Service.-

The Holland County Council is the Supervising Authority for the Borough under the Midwives Act, 1936.

Maternity Services.

Institutional Treatment for Mothers.

Health Visitors.

Child Life Protection.

Arrangements for Dental, Orthopaedic and other cases.)

Arrangements in connection with all the above services remained unchanged during the year. All have functioned very satisfactorily, and records kept shew that increased advantage continues to be taken of the facilities available.

BOSTON INFANT WELFARE CENTRE.

The Infant Welfare Centre has continued to carry out valuable work during the year under review, although the scope of this work has been much handicapped as a result of the unsuitability of the premises. It has of course been found necessary, following the outbreak of War, to abandon the scheme for the provision of a new Polyclinic, and to continue the present inconvenient arrangements for the time being.

Attendances at the Welfare Centre have remained much the same as for the previous year, as also have the figures relating to the supply of dried and liquid milk free or at cost price.

BOSTON DAY NURSERY.

The Day Nursery continued to function successfully during the year, the total number of attendances being 5,719, showing a large increase over the previous year's figure, 5,101. The present state of war has in my opinion made the care of children of increasing importance, and there is every indication that attendances will increase still further as more mothers take up work of national service.

No alteration has occurred during the year as regards the staff and administration, but an arrangement has been made with the Holland County Council whereby the Nursery was transferred in May, 1939, from the old Bank Street premises to Allan House, Carlton Road. The new premises are much more satisfactory than those formerly in use, and the arrangement is to operate until such time as circumstances permit the erection of the new Polyclinic.

The Day Nursery is recognised by the National Society of Day Nurseries as a Training School, and during 1939 five probationer nurses passed the examination of the Society, qualifying them to take posts as childrens' nurses.

4, HEALTH PUBLICITY :-

No special action was taken during the year for the promotion of interest in the Public Health Services.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1. WATER SUPPLY :-

I am indebted to Mr. T.H. Tyson, Waterworks Engineer, for the following extracts taken from his Annual Report for 1939 on the Borough Water Supply :-

Notwithstanding the crisis of September, 1938, and the disturbed conditions consequent thereon, followed by the declaration of War in September, 1939, the water supply was maintained without interruptions and normal pressures were sustained throughout the year.

Domestic and trade demands are still increasing. The average daily consumption during the year was 674,059 gallons (29.3 gallons per head), the largest daily consumption figure being 848,000 gallons on August 1st.

Following the declaration of War, arrangements were made for dealing with emergencies in case of damage, and provision was also made for watchmen and staff to be continually on duty in relays. In addition, spare pipes, fittings and emergency fittings have been acquired to cope with possible damage to mains during air raids.

Samples of water were taken for analysis monthly, and in every case the results were satisfactory.

The following are particulars of work carried out during the year :-

Total length of new public mains laid	...	1,258	yds.
" " " " private "	...	340	"
" " " mains renewed.	...	117	"
New supplies	...	127	
W.Cs. connected...	...	359	
Baths connected...	...	138	
Meters installed..	...	6	

In addition to the foregoing, connections have been made between the Corporation's mains and those of the Boston Rural District Council, at Sleaford Road, Wyberton Low Road and Burton Corner.

Circumstances have, however, curtailed the normal yearly programme of mains extensions and renewals.

2. MISCELLANEOUS :-

The sanitary circumstances of the Borough underwent practically no change during the year. The usual routine inspections were carried out by the Sanitary Staff, and the position at the end of the year was entirely satisfactory.

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

The inspection of dwellinghouses under the Public Health and Housing Acts was carried out in a satisfactory manner during the year, although as a result of the conditions prevailing during the last four months of the year the total number of inspections carried out is lower than the figure for the previous year.

It is satisfactory that, of the works of repair found necessary upon inspection, a very large proportion has been carried out without the serving of statutory notices being necessary.

The number of overcrowded houses at the end of the year shows a decrease on the figure for the previous year, in spite of the fact that 29 new cases were reported.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) MILK SUPPLY :-

Regular inspections have been made throughout the year of farms and dairies situated in the Borough, and on all occasions the premises have been found to be kept in a very satisfactory condition.

Samples of milk have been taken and submitted for examination for bacterial content, and the results have been satisfactory.

There are now no producers of Tuberculin Tested milk within the Borough.

(b) MEAT AND OTHER FOODS :-

All foodshops, stalls, vehicles, slaughterhouses and other premises used for the preparation of food have been regularly inspected, and a high standard has in all cases been maintained.

It is very satisfactory to note that the amount of meat inspected is now approximately 94% of that slaughtered in the Borough.

(c) ADULTERATION, &c :-

21 formal and 37 informal samples were taken during the year under the Food and Drugs (Adulteration) Act, 1928, and submitted to the Public Analyst. In two cases the samples were reported not to conform to the required standards, and appropriate action was taken against the vendors.

With the coming into operation of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, on the 1st. October, 1939, the duties as regards sampling were transferred to the Holland County Council.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Two important changes occurred during the year with regard to the notification of disease. By the coming into operation of Section 17 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, on the 1st. October, 1939, cases of food poisoning became notifiable, and Measles and Whooping Cough became notifiable on the 23rd. October, under the Measles and Whooping Cough Regulations, 1939.

NOTIFICATIONS RECEIVED :-

Scarlet Fever.-

23 cases were notified during the year, these being for the most part children between the ages of 4 and 12 years. This figure shews a decrease of 16 cases on that for the previous year.

Diphtheria.-

This disease took the form of an epidemic during the early part of the year. In all, 149 cases were notified, of which 96 were children attending elementary schools in the Borough. Two deaths were recorded.

Pneumonia.-

39 cases were notified during the year.

Erysipelas.-

One notification was received.

Puerperal Pyrexia.-

7 notifications were received, one more than for the previous year.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.-

4 cases were notified.

Measles.-

One case was notified after the 23rd. October.

Whooping Cough.-

Two Cases were notified after 23rd. October.

Chickenpox.-

The incidence of this disease was again lower than in the previous year, 73 cases being notified as compared with 134 in 1938.

Food Poisoning.-

After this condition became notifiable, one case was notified, poisoning being attributed to fish.

HOSPITAL TREATMENT :-

Of the cases referred to above, the following received hospital treatment during the year :-

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	18
Diphtheria...	...	...	...	...	142
Pneumonia ...	...	...	...	...	12
Erysipelas...	...	...	...	...	1
Puerperal Pyrexia..	...	...	...	...	6
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	4

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION :-

In view of the high incidence of this disease during the early months of the year, it was decided to carry out mass immunisation at the schools in the Borough. Treatment was offered to all children, and as a result of intensive propaganda was widely accepted. In the case of elementary school children, the percentage of acceptances was 76.31.

Facilities for this treatment were also extended to children under school age.

The following are particulars of treatment given during the year:-

Children attending Elementary Schools ...	2,538
Children attending Secondary Schools ...	222
Children attending Private Schools. ...	27
Children of Pre-School Age	257

The prophylactic used in all cases was T.A.F., two injections of 1 c.c. each being given at intervals of four weeks.

LABORATORY FACILITIES, PROVISION OF SERA, ETC. :-

In addition to facilities for the examination of other clinical material, the Public Health Laboratory of the Holland County Council also undertakes the typing of pneumococci and the provision of the appropriate type sera.

An arrangement is in operation in the Borough whereby measles serum is issued to medical practitioners free of charge in necessitous cases or at cost price in others, but no requests have been received for this material during the year.

TUBERCULOSIS :-

	Respiratory.	Non-Respiratory.	Total.
Cases on Register at commencement of year:	131	68	199
Cases added to Register during year by notification, transfer from other areas, etc.	22	7	29
Cases removed from Register on account of death, removal from district, etc.	25	3	28
Cases remaining on Register at end of year:	128	72	200

Official notification of this disease is carried out with a fair degree of efficiency.

No action was necessary during the year under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

BOSTON PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR 1939.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the following brief Report on the work carried out in connection with the Port Health Administration during the year ended 31st. December, 1939 :-

SHIPPING ENTERING THE PORT DURING THE YEAR :-

Of the total number of foreign and coast-wise ships entering the Port during the year, the following are particulars regarding inspections carried out, defects found and remedied, etc.-

Table A.

Number Inspected:-

(a) By Medical Officer of Health	...	34
(b) By Sanitary Inspector.	... ..	99
Number reported to be defective..	...	15
Number of Vessels on which defects were remedied..	.....	15
Number of Vessels reported as having or having had during the voyage infectious disease on board	... ..	Nil.

PORT SANITARY REGULATIONS, 1933 :-

Infectious Disease (Tables C & D).

Cases of Infectious Sickness landed from Vessels during the year	... ..	Nil.
Cases of Infectious Sickness occurring on Vessels during the voyage, but disposed of prior to arrival	... ..	Nil.

MEASURES AGAINST RODENTS :-

Rats destroyed during 1939:-

(1) On Vessels (Table E)...	25
(2) In Docks, Quays, Wharves and Warehouses. (Table F.)	No record.

Issue of Deratisation and Deratisation Exemption Certificates (Table H) :-

No certificates have been issued during the year, as Boston is not an approved Port. Certificates, when required, have been obtained

HYGIENE OF CREWS' SPACES :-

Classification of Nuisances (Table J).

Nationality of Vessel.	Number inspected during 1939.	Defects of original construction.	Structural defects through wear & tear.	Dirt, vermin & other conditions prejudicial to health.
British.-	40	Nil.	Nil.	7
Other Nations.-	59	Nil.	Nil.	8

FOOD INSPECTION :-

(1) No action was found to be necessary during the year under the Public Health (Imported Food) Regulations, 1937, the Public Health (Preservatives etc. in Food) Regulations 1925 to 1939, and the Public Health (Imported Milk) Regulations, 1926.

(2) Public Health (Shellfish) Regulations, 1934.-

There are Mussel and Cockle Beds within the area of the Port Health Authority in the Wash. These are periodically inspected and samples of the shellfish taken for analysis.

In my Annual Report for 1938 I referred to the question of the purification of mussels and a conference of the various Port Health and Riparian Authorities concerned which was held to consider the matter. This was followed in March, 1939, by a Conference at the Ministry of Health at which the Counties of Norfolk, Parts of Lindsey, Holland, and the Boroughs of Boston and King's Lynn were represented. No definite decision has yet been reached, but the question is still under consideration.

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I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

DC Robertson

Medical Officer of Health.

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